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LETTER DATED 13 AUGUST 1992 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I.
OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE
SECURITY COUNCIL

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to enclose herewith the text of the statement that my delegation wished to make had there been a formal debate on the situation in Bosnia Herzegovina, as requested by the Government of Bosnia Herzegovina and supported by a number of Governments, including my own.

I should be grateful if you would kindly circulate this letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) M. Javad ZARIF
Ambassador
Deputy Permanent Representative

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Annex

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Mr. President,

Allow me to express my felicitations on your assumption of the Presidency of the Security Council. I am confident that the Security Council will benefit greatly from your diplomatic skills and proven leadership. I would also like to thank Ambassador Jesus of Cape Verde for the masterful manner in which he guided the work of the Security Council during the month of July.

The issue before the Council today is one which has shocked the conscience of every human being irrespective of national origin, ethnic background, religion and political persuasion. In fact, the systematic crimes committed so barbarically against the people of Bosnia Herzegovina are reminiscent of shameful events in history, the recurrence of which humanity has tried so hard to prevent.

The horrendous crimes against the non-Serb population in former Yugoslavia have raged for more than a year. Serb nationalists in Bosnia Herzegovina, have conducted a campaign of genocide with full support and backing of Serbia and Montenegro. These are not ethnic wars, but a full scale and brutal war of aggression, premeditated, organized and centrally planned by the organized army of Serbia against the disarmed and peaceful peoples in Bosnia Herzegovina, one of the newest Members of this Organization. For over a year, the world has been watching the ever-deteriorating situation of the people of Bosnia Herzegovina - a people whose sovereignty and identity were and continue to be at great risk.

In reality, Bosnia Herzegovina as the innocent and disarmed victim of foreign aggression is entitled to exercise its inherent right to self-defence in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. But, how are the disarmed people in Bosnia Herzegovina to defend themselves against the reportedly third largest army in Europe? My delegation recognizes the wisdom of resolution 724 by which arms embargo is enforced against the entire former Yugoslavia. In our view, and in view of a large number of States, the circumstances have changed. Arms embargo has had an effect totally opposite to its intended goal. It has helped the Serbian aggressors to have an even greater upper hand vis-à-vis the victims, for the aggressors did not need to import weapons. We also recognize the dilemma of allowing the export of weapons to Bosnia Herzegovina. But in our view, the aggressors have left the international community with no other option. As a Member State of the United Nations Organization, Bosnia Herzegovina is entitled to be empowered to exercise its inherent right of self-defence. In this context, equal treatment of the aggressors and victims is morally wrong and legally unacceptable. We urge the Security Council to revisit resolution 724.

Mr. President,

The Security Council has been seized with the aggression in Bosnia Herzegovina for some time. The European Community has also attempted to mediate a political solution in Bosnia Herzegovina. My delegation wishes to register its appreciation for the efforts aimed at maintaining the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of Bosnia Herzegovina. The unfortunate reality is, however, that despite all these efforts, the carnage continues; the Serb nationalist supported by the armed forces of Serbia Montenegro continue to kill, maim, torture and grab more lands. By now, the aggressors have achieved most of their goals; they have uprooted non-Serbs from their homes and towns, ethnically cleansed so to speak, predetermined areas in Bosnia Herzegovina, and now control close to 90 per cent of the entire territory. More than 2.5 million civilians have been rendered homeless. This is nothing but a crime against humanity.

One possible explanation for the shortcomings of the international efforts to stop the aggression against the defenceless people of Bosnia Herzegovina is the fact that it has primarily focused on the symptoms of the aggression rather than the root causes. The root cause of the problem in Bosnia Herzegovina is the expansionist and hegemonic policy of Serbia and Montenegro exercised through their well equipped and trained army. The Security Council and others have yet to address this root cause. Instead, the humanitarian needs in Bosnia Herzegovina which are the natural symptoms of the aggression have received greater attention, albeit, unsuccessfully.

Mr. President,

My delegation recognizes that invoking Article 42 of the Charter is not the panacea for every regional conflict that may endanger international peace and security. The Serbian aggression against the disarmed people of Bosnia Herzegovina, however, has reached such an enormous and catastrophic proportion which when combined with the actual positioning of the Serbian forces in Bosnia Herzegovina with its particular geographic character bars all other options but a genuine, concrete, and decisive decision by the Security Council in accordance with Article 42 of the United Nations Charter.

Time is of the essence, Mr. President, if we are not to witness the total annihilation of a nation and the devouring of the weak and newly established state of Bosnia Herzegovina by a powerful neighbour.

Thank you, Mr. President.